

All over again

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It was Bangalore 2016 all over again, this time in Guyana, as Bangladesh snatched a three-run defeat from the jaws of victory in the second one-day international against the West Indies yesterday.

The Tigers had looked on course for a thrilling victory and a second series win against the West Indies in the Caribbean when Mashfiqur Rahim and Mahmudullah Riyad steered a rocking boat and guided them close to their target of 272 with seven wickets in hand and 40 needed off the last five overs.

But the Tigers had shown time and again that they are the masters of fashioning incredible defeats from positions of absolute strength, and a similar sort of debacle played out again before a sparse crowd at the Providence Stadium yesterday, starting with Mahmudullah's mind-boggling run-out after an 87-run fourth-wicket stand.

The hard-hitting batsman seemed to have lost his wits as he charged down frantically when Mashfiqur, the man on strike, had barely had the time to look at his partner after suffering a blow to the midriff from West Indies skipper Jason Holder's short ball. Mahmudullah was more than halfway down the track, with no chance of making it back to the crease.

That was probably the first sign of Bangladesh hitting the panic button since the pair got together, but it was certainly not the last.

Mashfiqur, though, played sensibly and looked like he was out to banish those past memories of failure, including the one from that infamous defeat against India in the 2016 World T20, when Mahmudullah and Mashfiqur departed after bringing the equation down to just two from three balls.

But with eight runs needed off the last seven balls, Sabir Rahman's premeditation cost him as he hit a low full toss from Keemo Paul in the air to deep midwicket. Then came the decisive blow as Mashfiqur repeated the exact same shot that had brought his demise on many a crucial occasion -- pulling a wayward full-toss from Holder down the throat of midwicket after having played so sensibly for his 67-ball 68.

The other batsmen hardly had the guts or skill to eke out the eight remaining runs off the last five deliveries.

The end of the innings was a far cry from the start as Bangladesh smashed 71 off the first seven overs, with Anamul Haque departing for 23 off nine before Tamim Iqbal and Shakib Al Hasan feasted on some wayward bowling from the West Indian pacers.

The explosive start gave way to slow and nervy progress in the middle overs as Ashley Nurse and Devendra Bishoo spun their web around the batting, utilising the increasing turn and bounce off the pitch, and eventually forcing two injudicious strokes from Tamim (54) and Shakib (56) in quick succession.

But Mashfiqur and Mahmudullah took their time, calmed the nerves, and with a bit of luck, saw off the two spinners as

Bangladesh looked certain to chase down the target, only to throw it away again at the end.

Earlier, an authoritative hundred from young Shimron Hetmyer and an overall drop of the guard from the Bangladesh players allowed the hosts to post a challenging 271 after they were sent in to bat by Bangladesh skipper Mashfiqur Bin Mortaza.

Hetmyer followed up his excellent half-century from the first match with a 93-ball 125 -- the second ODI hundred for the 21-year-old left-hander -- to salvage a nose-diving innings and take it to a fighting total.

The former Windies U-19 skipper, who was the last man to be dismissed while trying to steal a double on the third delivery of the final over, built a 103-run partnership for the fifth wicket with Rovman Powell before taking charge all by himself and launching into a late assault.

But it had looked like West Indies would have been bowled out for a much lower score when Jason Mohammed became the fourth batsman to be dismissed with the scoreboard reading 103 for four after 24 overs.

With an out-of-form Powell joining Hetmyer and Jason Holder -- the only recognizable all-rounder -- to follow, Bangladesh should have tightened the noose around the Windies batting. Instead they started giving away singles and doubles through misfields, which was complemented by some rank loose deliveries from most of the bowlers.

Two run-out chances against Powell went begging while Hetmyer, batting on 79, given a fresh life by Shakib who missed a sitter at the boundary and parried it over for six. The Tigers were made to pay as the youngster bludgeoned 46 runs off the next 21 balls faced.

Rubel was Bangladesh's most successful bowler with three wickets but he was also the most expensive, giving away 61 overs -- his last over costing 22 -- the infamous penultimate over Trophy final against India and reflecting the apparent lack of ideas of Bangladesh's bowling unit when under pressure.

The decisive third ODI will take place in St. Kitts and Nevis on July 28.



It was another heartbreak for Mashfiqur Rahim as, after having taken the team to touching distance, he fell at the final hurdle.

PHOTO: AFP

'Not the first time this has happened'

SPORTS REPORTER



Even for a man as resilient as Mashfiqur Bin Mortaza, it was not possible to hold back sheer frustration after the way his side gifted a win to West Indies in the second ODI in Guyana on Wednesday. It was not the heart-breaking three-run defeat, but a recurring and drawn-out mistake that saddened the inspirational Bangladesh ODI skipper most.

"Honestly speaking, we are making the same mistake. I think we should have handled our nerves in a relaxed manner and ended the game with singles and twos," Mashfiqur lamented while speaking to reporters after the match. "We are not learning from our past mistakes."

Mashfiqur's disappointment was even greater given the commanding position the Tigers were in. They could have sealed the series with a game remaining as Mashfiqur Rahim and Mahmudullah Riyad steered a rocking boat after Tamim Iqbal and Shakib Al Hasan spoiled their good work in fits of madness.

Mashfiqur and Mahmudullah had guided the visitors close to their target of 272 with seven wickets in hand and 40 needed off the last five overs. But, like on many previous occasions, Bangladesh yet again failed to win a close encounter and lost to the West Indies by 3 runs.

"It is disappointing to lose such a game when you need 14 runs from 13 balls with six wickets in hand. It is more disappointing because it is not the first time we have lost a game from such a position. It has happened on quite a few occasions," Mashfiqur said.

The 34-year-old was unsure whether there were mental or technical issues behind such repeated acts.

"I am not sure whether it is mental or technical because it is tough to describe it. If we required 20 runs from 12 balls then it is a different thing but when you need 14 runs from 13 balls and fail to get them. It is hard to decide whether it is technical or mental," Mashfiqur explained.

"We should have finished the game easily but unfortunately we could not. If we had the tendency to score from singles then the match would be ours," added Mashfiqur.

The skipper also mentioned that although it was often hard to say where things had gone wrong in these types of games, he admitted that Riyad's run-out proved to be costly for the Tigers.

"The game continued till the last ball. In these types of matches it is very tough to say where things went wrong. But obviously if [Mahmudullah] Riyad had not gotten run-out then it would be an easier game for us," Mashfiqur concluded.

Mashfiqur and Co. will now have to ensure that they do not repeat all those mistakes in the series-deciding third and final ODI in Basseterre on Saturday.

Rashid surprised by England recall

AFP, London

Adil Rashid admitted even he was "kind of surprised" by his dramatic recall to England's Test squad for next week's series opener against India at Edgbaston.

But angry Yorkshire chief executive Mark Arthur said he hoped England "knew what they are doing".

Rashid was included in a 13-man squad announced Thursday even though the Yorkshire leg-spinner has opted out of playing first-class County Championship cricket this season.

"It was definitely a tough decision -- and yes, obviously, I was kind of surprised," Rashid told Sky Sports News.

"To get back in the Test side, usually people have got to go back to their counties and perform to be considered."

"But me and Ed Smith (England's national selector), and a few others, had a chat -- and they were thinking, if I can be available... we'll be happy for me to be in the squad."

"That's something I had to think about, and I made that decision to be available."

But Rashid's inclusion provoked a furious reaction from Arthur.

"We're very surprised that England have called Adil up after not playing red ball cricket this season," he told Yorkshire's website. "Neither has he expressed a desire to do so."

"I hope that England know what they're doing to Adil, and the county game."

Rashid is now in line to play his first home Test, after all 10 of his previous appearances were made overseas.

His recall came alongside that of off-spinner Moeen Ali, who was preferred to Somerset's Dom Bess -- a Test debutant in the drawn series against Pakistan earlier this season.

Rashid's selection in a squad for what will be England's 1,000th Test when they face India in the first of a five-match series at Edgbaston, comes despite him deciding to opt out of all first-class cricket this year ahead of a home World Cup campaign in 2019.

Mushy almost covers for the Shakib-Tamim choke

SPORTS REPORTER



49 runs off 13.5 overs were scored as Bangladesh's chase of 272 slowed down after a flying start that saw the Tigers race to 80 for one after just 11 overs. At 129 for one after 24.5 overs, with two set batsmen at the crease and the required run rate still below six, Bangladesh were very much in pole position to seal the match and the series by winning the second ODI against West Indies in Guyana on Wednesday.

But Tamim, the match-winning centurion in the first match, went down the wicket off the second ball he faced from leg-spinner Devendra Bishoo, played an ugly heave that connected with nothing but air and was stumped.

Having lost his partner in a 97-run second-wicket stand, it was then Shakib's turn to lose his mind. The required rate did not creep above six till the end of the 28th over, but Shakib spent the period between Tamim's dismissal and his dismissal in the 30th over demonstrating the perils of premeditation. That he scored his second fifty on the trot in that time is really an academic detail; all his innings will be remembered for is the ugly, one-handed slash at off-spinner Ashley Nurse that looped to the fielder at backward point.

The stark contrast between the duo's contributions in the first match and their brain freeze in the second is Bangladesh cricket in a nutshell. On Sunday they had brought all their experience into play during a record 207-run stand; they correctly assessed the pitch and set up a 48-run win by scoring 279 for four which owed much to Tamim batting through and cashing in at the end. Yet, faced with simpler equations three days later, they completely lost the plot.

Being a day-night match in which

Bangladesh won the toss, West Indies undoubtedly had the worst of conditions. In the daytime the pitch was slow and low, but young batsman Shimron Hetmyer had much more wither than the two seasoned pros in the opposition to bat through the hard times and explode with a beautiful century in the end.

The pitch quickened up under the lights and the dew and Bangladesh, helped by a nine-ball 23 from opener Anamul Haque, had the match all set up. The pitch was turning, but the specialist spinners in the opposition -- Bishoo and Nurse -- were first of all not lethal and, secondly, just two in number.

Bangladesh had worked themselves into a position from where they could play those spinners out and go back to maximising returns from the pace bowlers. From the 17th to the 23rd over, part-time off-spinner Chris Gayle was allowed to bowl four overs for just 11 runs. 20 of those balls were played by Tamim and he scored just seven from his bat while playing out 14 dot balls. It is a sad comment that being a subcontinent batsman Tamim lost composure while playing average spinners. But the greater culpability is that having damaged the run rate, Tamim just surrendered and exited the scene with the ugliest of shots.

Before that, fast bowler Rubel Hossain -- someone who proved that he is experienced only in terms of matches played -- did for West Indies with the ball what Shakib and Tamim did with the bat. Rubel had bowled with good rhythm, found his yorkers to good effect and was unlucky when what should have been a catch off Hetmyer in the 43rd over had been parried over by Shakib at deep midwicket. But one six in the penultimate over sent all his composure out the window. In an over which cost 22 runs to spoil what was a good bowling effort from Bangladesh, Rubel either bowled length balls to the brilliant

Hetmyer or wides and above-waist-height no-balls.

It is tempting to jump on the bandwagon and blame Mashfiqur Rahim for getting out of a full toss in the last over once again. But while his dismissal against India in Bangalore during a 2016 World Twenty20 match was irresponsible because, needing two to win off three all he needed to do was hit along the ground. His intention cannot be faulted on Wednesday.



Tamim Iqbal's wild charge down the track resulted in a crucial wicket lost at exactly the wrong time in the second ODI against the West Indies on Wednesday.

PHOTO: AFP

Booters to start against Uzbeks

SPORTS REPORTER



The Bangladesh national football team will begin their campaign in next month's Asian Games with a match against Uzbekistan on August 14. They will take on Thailand in the following match two days later before playing the final match of Group B against Qatar on August 20.

The fixtures were released yesterday after the tournament had a redraw on the previous day, following the late inclusion of Palestine and the United Arab Emirates.

The two late inclusions means that the tournament will now be a 26-team affair, with the teams split into six groups. The top two teams from each group and the four best third-placed finishers will move into

the second round, which will be a knockout round.

Meanwhile, the Bangladesh team played out a 1-1 draw against Sheikh Jamal Dhamondi Club in a practice match at the BKSP in Savar yesterday. Biplab Ahmed gave the national team -- comprised of under-23 players with three overaged players -- a third minute lead but they conceded an own goal, courtesy of Rahmat Mia, in the 43rd minute to share the spoils.

The Bangladesh team coach experimented with the playing eleven while Sheikh Jamal fielded three foreign players.

The Bangladesh team will leave for South Korea on July 29 for a pre-tournament conditioning camp, where they are expected to play a friendly match. The 20-member team will leave South Korea for Indonesia on August 11.

BD-WI SCOREBOARD

WEST INDIES	R/B	45/6s	BANGLADESH	R/B	45/6s
Gayle lbw b Mehedy	29/38	3/1	Tamim st Hope b Bishoo	54/85	6/0
Lewis lbw b Mashfiqur	12/18	1/1	Anamul b Joseph	23/9	2/2
Hope c Sabbir b Shakib	25/43	3/0	Shakib c Paul b Nurse	56/72	5/0
Hetmyer run out	125/93	3/7	Mashfiqur c Paul b Holder	68/67	5/1
Mohammed c Mashfiqur			Mahmudullah	39/51	0/2
b Rubel	12/15	1/0	Sabir c Hetmyer b Paul	12/11	1/0
Power b Rubel	44/67	4/0	Mosaddeq not out	3/4	0/0
Holder stt b Mashfiqur			Mashfiqur not out	1/1	0/0
b Shakib	7/5	0/1	Extras: (b-1, lb-4, w-7)	12	
Nurse c Tamim			Total: (For 6 wkt/s in 50 overs) 268		
Mashfiqur	3/8	0/0	Did not bat: Mehedy, Rubel, Mashfiqur.		
Paul c Mashfiqur b Rubel	4/4	0/0	Fall of wickets: 1-32, 2-129, 3-145, 4-232, 5-264, 6-264.		
Bishoo b Mashfiqur	0/2	0/0			
Joseph not out	1/5	0/0			
Extras: (lb-6, nb-1, w-2)	9				
Total: (All out in 49.3 overs) 271					
Fall of wickets: 1-29, 2-55, 3-77, 4-102, 5-205, 6-224, 7-236, 8-241, 9-242, 10-271.					
Bowler	0	M R W</			